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## Two For the Price of One

The beautiful and wondrous Parsha of Toldot opens up with the very beginnings of a new generation. It tells of the offspring of Avraham and immediately goes into the beginning of the next generation being created by Yitzchak Avinu and Rivka Imenu. Even before they enter the world, it goes into detail of the twin pregnancy of Rivka and the eternal fight between them (*"Vyitrotzitzu Habanim B'kirbah"*)—"The children agitated within her") that began in the womb. Even before they had a name and identity (Yaakov and Eisav), Hashem himself in Pasuk 23 of Perek 25 tells how there are two nations and two regimes and how one will be mightier than the other. It then follows with relatively great detail of the birth of the two sons and how they looked and the reason for their names.

You may then be disappointed to discover that the next Pasuk, 27, skips over the childhood of Yaakov and Eisav and goes straight into *"Vayigdilu Hanearim"* – The boys grew

up". How Esav was a 'animal trapper' and 'man of the field' while Yaakov was 'simple' and 'sat in tents'. With all of the details of their coming into this world, where is their childhood?!

Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch in a controversial commentary tells us how the Torah is hinting to us a lesson in education (especially with our children). According to the Pesukim, if we look at the two personalities in the beginning of the Parsha, without bias they seem to be different, but not necessarily good or bad. It's only when they grow up how we see things play out. Mishlei tells us to *"Chanoach l'naar al pi darko"* – "bring up each child according to his/her own way". Rav Hirsch brings up how every child is different, yet Yitzchak and Rivka brought up their children in the same way. If they would have educated Esav NOT in the way of Yitzchak, but rather the way in which 'a man of the field' should be educated, Yitzchak would still have been great and Esav could have been just as great in his own way. He says

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those Pesukim of their childhood are missing since the education was focused on the result of their children and not necessarily in their everyday needs.

While I don't know if I could agree with such a claim made on our holy foremother and forefather, the message I believe is deep and correct. The way of education is not to force the Torah onto our children, but to help find our children's place within the Torah.

May we all be Zoche to find ourselves in the Torah and in the rebuilding of the Beit Hamikdash speedily in our days. Shabbat Shalom



## Koby Erdfarb 11th Grade, Efrat Deal or No Deal?

In parshat Toldot the Torah tells us the story of Yaakov acquiring the firstborn birthright from his older brother Eisav for a bowl of soup. As the story goes, Eisav was returning from a hunting expedition and was starving. When he arrived at home, Yaakov was in the middle of making himself a meal. Eisav, in his famished state, asks for some of the soup. Yaakov responds and says, "sure but it will cost you your birthright."

Eisav jumps at the opportunity and states "הֲנִי אָמֹת הַלֶּחֶם לְמֹת וְלִמְסָהֶ֜הָ לִּי בְּכֹרְהָ" - I'm going to die anyway, why do I need the birthright." At first glance, it seems like Yaakov is taking advantage of Eisav. However, if you look closer you can see that Yaakov took extra steps to ensure that Eisav was in his right mind before he made this deal.

In the pasuk, Eisav only asked for the lentil soup, yet we see that Yaakov also gave him bread. Could it be that this was just a gesture of brotherly love? Probably not. Yaakov first gave him enough bread to stave off his hunger to ensure that Eisav would not have any regrets about the sale. Then when Eisav was no longer hungry, Yaakov asked him if he was still interested in the lentil soup in exchange for the birthright. Only then, when Eisav was satiated did he decide to sell his birthright to Yaakov for a pot of lentil soup.

Yaakov's actions are a lesson to all generations on the values of fair play. Just because you have the upper hand doesn't mean you should use it. Shabbat Shalom ■

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